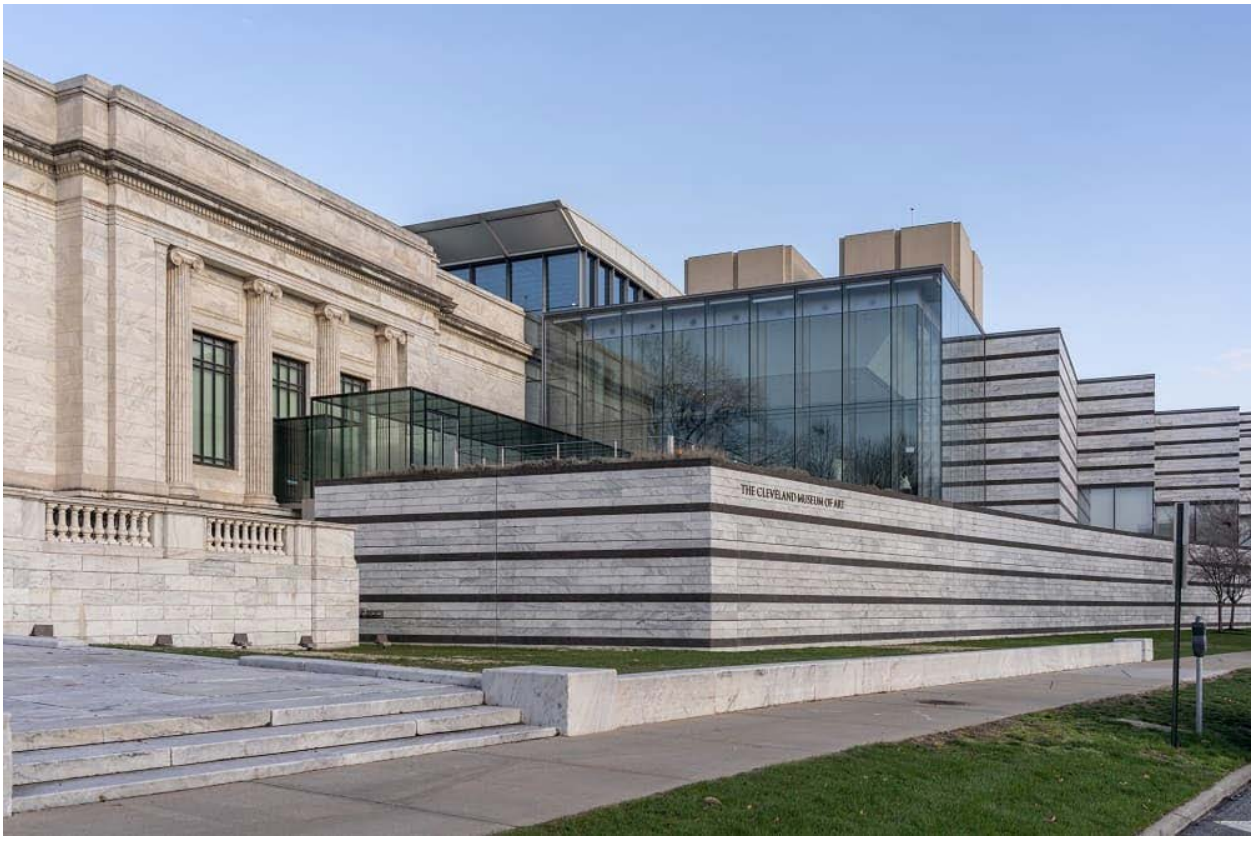
The Cleveland Museum of Art Announces New Acquisitions

Thursday April 13, 2023



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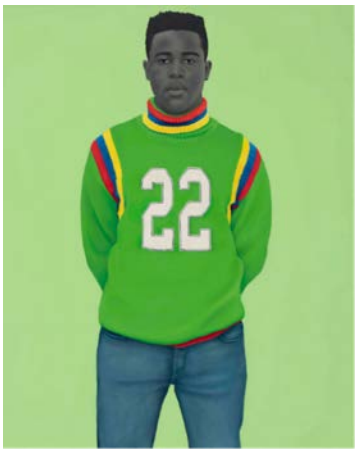
The CMA's commitment to adding works by celebrated artists from all periods is reflected in its latest acquisitions

PRESS KIT

Cleveland (April 13, 2023)—Recent acquisitions by the Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA) include a portrait by Amy Sherald, one of the world's leading contemporary figurative painters; an Italian bronze by Giovanni Battista Foggini, a prominent Florentine sculptor of the Baroque period; a rare candlelight painting by Anna Dorothea Therbusch; a Greek red-figure vase attributed to the Kleophon Painter; a highly finished drawing by Kerry James Marshall; and a suite of 12 color monoprints by Edgar Heap of Birds, one of the most influential Native American artists working today.

***He was meant for all things to meet*, Amy Sherald**

The CMA acquires work by Amy Sherald, one of the foremost figurative painters working today



He was meant for all things to meet, 2022. Amy Sherald (American, b. 1973). Oil on linen; unframed: 137.5 x 109.4 x 6.4 cm. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Leonard C. Hanna Jr. Fund, 2023.5

Amy Sherald is one of the leading contemporary figurative painters, widely celebrated for her portraits documenting Black American subjects. Sherald, whose distinctive style captured the attention of First Lady Michelle Obama in 2018, rose to fame after painting Mrs. Obama's official portrait for the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C.

He was meant for all things to meet is a portrait of Sherald's nephew, Keith Pemberton. Sherald was moved to paint this portrait after encountering a snapshot of Keith in his lacrosse jersey (number 22). She found this to be an auspicious image, showing a young man on the cusp of a promising adulthood. Sherald has said of this series of paintings, "My eyes search for people who are and who have the kind of light that provides the present and the future with hope."

He was meant for all things to meet exemplifies Sherald's pared-down realism and displays the hallmarks of her renowned portraiture. Through composition and color, Sherald endows her subjects with a powerful physical presence: they fill the frame and meet the viewer with a direct outward gaze. While Sherald grants her subjects contemporary everyday qualities through their clothing and poses, she typically detaches them from an inhabitable world, placing them against flat, solid-colored backgrounds that lack markers of time and place. The artist's play between real and fantastical representation is rooted in the way she fuses traits of photography and painting.

Sherald enacts another interruption of realism by rendering the Black skin of her subjects in shades of gray. Sherald has spoken of her use of grisaille, a centuries-old tradition in art history, as a technique to focus her viewer's attention on the interior life of her subjects rather than on their outward identities.

He was meant for all things to meet will be installed in the CMA's Toby's Gallery for Contemporary Art (229A) in April.

***Red-Figure Stamnos*, Attributed to the Kleophon Painter**

The stamnos, a vessel for mixing and serving wine, is a rare shape

Red-Figure Stamnos (Mixing/Storage Vessel): Komos (Musicians and Revelers), c. 435-425 BCE. Attributed to the Kleophon Painter (Greek, Attic, active c. 440–410 BCE). Ceramic; h. 40.4 cm, w. 39 cm (at handles). The Cleveland Museum of Art, John L. Severance Fund, 2023.3

This stamnos, a high-shouldered, wide-mouthed vessel, is one of fewer than 500 Attic red-figure examples surviving today. A rare form of vessel, the stamnos was ostensibly made for mixing and serving wine at Greek symposia or drinking parties, but also frequently exported to ancient Italy. This red-figure example features an elegantly dressed woman playing the pipes leading three nearly nude male figures across the front of the vase. Three draped young men and the image of a small wine jug occupy the reverse, connecting to the livelier komos (post-symposium revelry fueled by wine and music) of the other side. The vessel is attributed to the Kleophon Painter, whose vase paintings are often cited for demonstrating the influence of the sculptural style of the Parthenon, the temple on the Athenian Acropolis in Greece dedicated to the goddess Athena created during the 5th century BCE. This stamnos has been known for more than a century and has been published numerous times. The Red-Figure Stamnos will be installed in the Dr. John and Helen Collis Family Gallery for Greek Art (102C) in early May 2023.

***Apollo Flaying Marsyas*, Giovanni Battista Foggini**

Exquisitely detailed Florentine bronze sculpture purchased at auction at Christie's, New York, captures the essence of Italian Baroque style and emotion

Apollo Flaying Marsyas, c. 1691–1700. Giovanni Battista Foggini (Italian, 1652–1725). Bronze; h. 59.8 cm. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Leonard C. Hanna Jr. Fund, 2023.2.

Giovanni Battista Foggini's *Apollo Flaying Marsyas* is a masterpiece of Italian Baroque sculpture. This striking statuette is categorized as a bronzetto (small bronze), yet it captures the presence and intensity of larger artworks. Two feet tall, and ingeniously designed to reward close viewing from all angles, this sculpture emanates monumentality in form and content. Its exquisite quality and condition, as well as its unrivaled position at the pinnacle of Foggini's production of bronzetti—the master's specialty—makes Apollo Flaying Marsyas a highly sought-after example of the work of this leading Tuscan sculptor. Following a smallpox infection in his youth, Foggini developed a physical disability affecting his hip, which made it difficult for him to walk and/or stand for extended periods of time. Because he could not make works of monumental scale himself, he instead cultivated an interest in statuettes; this focus led him to become a master in the medium.

In Greek mythology, the overconfident satyr (half-goat, half-man) Marsyas challenged Apollo, god of the arts, to a musical duel. The defeated Marsyas was tied to a tree and skinned alive as punishment for his pride. Foggini's sculpture captures the moment of Apollo's first incision as the bound Marsyas cries out in agony. The gnarled branches echo the satyr's anguish while the god's wrath is manifest in his billowing drapery.

Apollo Flaying Marsyas was acquired at Christie's, New York, in "Modern Medici: Masterpieces from a New York Collection" on January 27, 2023. It will be installed in the Donna and James Reid Gallery for Italian Baroque art (217) in early May.

***A Scientist Seated at a Desk by Candlelight*, Anna Dorothea Therbusch**

Rare painting by female artist acquired at auction at Sotheby's, New York, taps into a world of discovery during the Age of Enlightenment

A Scientist Seated at a Desk by Candlelight, c. 1767. Anna Dorothea Therbusch (German, 1721–1782).
Oil on canvas; 100 x 81 cm. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Leonard C. Hanna Jr. Fund, 2023.1

A Scientist Seated at a Desk by Candlelight is one of only a handful of candlelight subjects painted by Anna Dorothea Therbusch, a German painter born to a large family of artists. Therbusch excelled at painting candlelight pictures, which require specialized skills observing light and shadow and balancing a subtle range of tonalities. In this painting, Therbusch captures both the romance of the dedicated scientist studying late into the night and the novelty of his tools of discovery.

Therbusch was part of a group of artists who understood candlelight pictures as tapping into a world of discovery and representation especially intriguing during the Enlightenment age of scientific exploration. Distinguished among the small coterie of eighteenth-century female painters in Europe, she was appointed a member of the fine arts and royal academies of Stuttgart, Vienna, Bologna, and Paris. Therbusch was first refused admission to the Academy in Paris on the grounds that because of her work's originality the committee did not believe it could have been painted by a woman. It was not until she permitted eyewitnesses to observe and document her in the act of painting that she was admitted to the academy in 1767. Although her name is little known today, Therbusch was

well known in her time and was employed by several courts including that of Frederick the Great of Prussia.

A Scientist Seated at a Desk by Candlelight was acquired at Sotheby's, New York, on January 26, 2023.

***Untitled (Exquisite Corpse Snowman)*, Kerry James Marshall**

Drawing by contemporary Black artist who examines race and art history

Untitled (Exquisite Corpse Snowman), 2022. Kerry James Marshall (American, b. 1955). Black ink wash, pen and black ink and watercolor with graphite on wove paper; sheet: 60.8 x 47.8 cm. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Gift of Agnes Gund, 2023.7

Untitled (Exquisite Corpse Snowman) belongs to a series of drawings created over the past year by Kerry James Marshall, a contemporary Black artist who uses painting and drawing to examine race and art history. Marshall sees each viewer's interpretation as integral to his recent works. The complex imagery in this drawing features a portrait of Shirley Chisholm, the first Black woman elected to Congress in 1968 and the first Black candidate of any gender to seek nomination for president of the United States in 1972. At the bottom of the sheet, the artist presents the lower half of a fashionably dressed woman with a tiny dog in her bag. Her glamorous outward concerns seem intended to contrast with Chisholm's pure professional ambition. The two women are connected, notably, by a snowman—a structure that will inevitably fail, collapsing with changing weather.

The work was inspired by Exquisite Corpse, a parlor game that was popular among Surrealist artists and writers in Paris during the 1920s. Participants contributed to a drawing before folding the sheet and passing it on, creating an image that is often humorous in its absurdity. Marshall had participated in iterations of the game with other artists as early as the 1990s, favoring it for its resemblance to collage. In 2021, Marshall began to consider the Exquisite Corpse format more critically, thinking of how it could be used to investigate and reframe Black identity.

***Was Told 12 Times*, Edgar Heap of Birds**

Text-based work by one of today's most influential Native American artists

invites viewers to reconsider American and Indigenous history

Was Told 12 Times, 2022. Edgar Heap of Birds (American, enrolled Cheyenne and Arapaho, b. 1954). 12 color etchings;

each: 22 x 15 in.; overall: 66 x 60 in. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Severance and Greta Millikin Trust, 2023.8.1–12

Edgar Heap of Birds creates text-based works that invite viewers to examine the place of Native identity within contemporary America. In alignment with the CMA's strategic plan initiative to acquire works by contemporary Native American artists, Was Told 12 Times includes twelve unique prints, each of which reads: "DO NOT DANCE FOR PAY." Heap of Birds describes the work as referencing the contradiction of dancing in Indigenous culture as a centrally important part of ritual, but often referenced in popular imagery of Native people.